

Edward Livingston to Andrew Jackson, January 15, 1835, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

EDWARD LIVINGSTON TO JACKSON.

Paris, January 15, 1835.

My dear General, You will see from the Despatches and papers sent by this conveyance the extraordinary state of things here. Your message¹ has embarrassed them greatly, and they want to hide their faults, which it exposes, by a bravado and an affected sense of injured Dignity. My great hope is that my conduct in the difficult situation in which I am placed may meet your approbation. I thought it unbecoming the dignity of my station to Demand my passports merely on their suggestion that I ought to do so, and I therefore Required an Explicit Declaration of their intentions and let them take the responsibility of ordering me off. I have since had reason to suspect that the equivocal terms of the Note were suggested by that Wiley old Diplomat Talleyrand: and that they were intended [to] convey to the public here and to Europe in General, the idea [of] great Vigour in their Measures, while if complained of by our government my demand of passports might be declared to be my voluntary act. in both of these Objects they will fail. The Diplomatic body here with few Exceptions all called on me yesterday, and I have the satisfaction of Knowing that the Course I have pursued which I Did not think it proper to conceal is warmly approved.

1 Message of Dec. 1, 1834. *Messages*, III. 97–123.

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If I should be obliged to leave this immediately and wait your Orders until the spring I trust to your friendship and sense of Justice for such indemnification for inevitable losses, and Expences, as it will be legal and proper to grant.

If the law passes for giving the indemnity let them say what they please, it will be Owing to the Energetic tone of your Message, if it fail it will be owing to a belief that you will not be supported, a belief endeavoured to be propagated by the Opposition papers at home and by the legitimate papers here which are making every effort to goad the Chambers into a rejection of the law in the hope that in a War they may hope for a restoration.

I think I ought to mention that the insidious paragraph from the intelligencer published on the day the Message appeared, was sent on here by Mr. Niles with an Opinion that it contained the general Sense of the people of the U.S. Was it not a good Omen that your Message arrived here on the 8th of January? It will I trust be the means of another signal Victory, over political injustice, as the first was over open hostility. By the bulk of my public Despatches you will see that I must be somewhat fatigued. You will excuse the incorrectness of this hasty scrawl intended only for you and to assure you of my Devoted attachment.